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induced to go and see what to avoid,—how pigments ought not to be used,—what color is not.

The made-up look of the grouping of the figures, is a thing of course. It is almost unknown to American art as yet, the conceiving of a thing as it might have happened, the composition of a scene as it might have appeared. This drawing-room assemblage among whom nothing is going on, where there is no principal action and very little bye-play, where Mrs. Washington waits upon her platform, with her two supporters, to receive those who do not come, while all present shrink away from the ordeal, while yet only the President himself seems prepared to act as usher, he being compelled to demonstrate to Miss Chew the propriety of paying her respects to the hostess, where the Duke of Kent knows no one to talk to, and Colonel Trumbull no one but his father, while eighteen ladies, as we count, are talking to each other or looking into vacancy,—this drawing-room assemblage in its utter absence of meaning, purpose, or leading idea, is a fair representation of the American Art of the past. Now, a drawing-room scene is not the noblest subject for Art, but may be excused as a good way to bring interesting people together, on canvass,

as in life. And a drawing-room scene, being of itself uninteresting and artificial, needs vigorous and realistic treatment to make it endurable. There is action in a drawing-room, if it is only the achievement of presentation, the progress of flirtations, the dropping of fans and handkerchiefs, the grouping in pairs and in clusters, the visible conversation. In all Mr. Huntington's picture there is but one sign of life; it is in the very centre of the canvass, where Arthur Middleton has Mrs. Drayton on his arm; it seems at first glance that he is about to lead her to Mrs. Washington, but that theory we had to give up. It will be well to find the first volume of "Once a Week," and to turn to page 352, where will be found an admirable drawing by M. J. Lawless, a historical picture, a faithful representation of a London evening party, all the company crowding the hall and staircase, for coolness and tea, between dances, the ladies covered with their opera cloaks, the footmen handing tea;—all as it is actually done. When we get a painter *de société* as much in earnest as Mr. Lawless, we may have an American party of the present or the past rightly painted.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE.

A BEAUTIFUL DESCRIPTION.

"THE birth-day was come, and every thing was ready. The wall was all complete which protected the raised village road against the water, and so was the walk; passing the church for a short distance it followed the path which had been laid out by Charlotte, and then winding upwards among the rocks, inclined first under the summer-house to the right, and then, after a wide sweep, passed back above it to the right again, and so by degrees out on to the summit.

A large party had assembled for the occasion. They went first to church, where they found the whole congregation collected together in their holiday dresses. After service, they filed out in order; first the boys, then the young men, then the old; after them came the party from the castle, with their visitors and retinue; and the village maidens, young girls and women, brought up the rear.

At the turn of the walk, a raised stone seat had been contrived, where

the Captain made Charlotte and the visitors stop and rest. From here they could see over the whole distance, from the beginning to the end—the troops of men who had gone up before them, the file of women following, and now drawing up where they were. It was lovely weather, and the whole effect was singularly beautiful. * * * *

They followed the crowd who had slowly ascended, and were now forming a circle round the spot where the future house was to stand. The lord of the castle, his family, and the principal strangers were now invited to descend into the vault, where the foundation-stone, supported on one side, lay ready to be let down. A well-dressed mason, a trowel in one hand and a hammer in the other, came forward, and with much grace spoke an address in verse, of which in prose we can give but an imperfect rendering.

“Three things,” he began, “are to be looked to in a building—that it stand on the right spot; that it be securely founded; that it be successfully executed. The first is the business of the master of the house—his and his only. As in the city the prince and the council alone determine where a building shall be, so in the country it is the right of the lord of the soil that he shall say, ‘Here my dwelling shall stand; here, and nowhere else.’”

“To the third, the execution, there is neither art nor handicraft which must not in some way contribute. But the second, the founding, is the province of the mason; and boldly to speak it out, it is the head and front of all the undertaking—a solemn thing it is—and our bidding you descend hither is full of meaning. You are celebrating your Festival in the deep of the earth. Here, within this small hollow spot, you do us the honor of appearing as witnesses of our mysterious craft. Presently we shall lower down this carefully-hewn

stone into its place; and soon these earth-walls, now ornamented with fair and worthy persons, will be no more accessible, but will be closed in forever!

“This foundation-stone, which with its angles typifies the just angles of the building; with the sharpness of its moulding, the regularity of it; and with the truth of its lines to the horizontal and perpendicular, the uprightness and equal height of all the walls; we might now, without more ado, let down—it would rest in its place with its own weight. But, even here, there shall not fail of lime and means to bind it. For as human beings who may be well inclined to each other by nature, yet hold together more firmly when the law cements them, so are stones also, whose forms may already fit together, united far better by these binding forces. It is not seemly to be idle among the working, and here you will not refuse to be our fellow laborers,”—with these words he reached the trowel to Charlotte, who threw mortar with it under the stone—several of the others were then desired to do the same, and then it was at once let fall; upon which the hammer was placed next in Charlotte’s and then in the others’ hands, to strike three times with it, and conclude in this expression the wedlock of the stone with the earth.

“The work of the mason,” went on the speaker, “now under the free sky as we are, if it be not done in concealment, yet must pass into concealment—the soil will be laid smoothly in and thrown over this stone, and with the walls which we rear into the daylight, we in the end are seldom remembered. The works of the stone-cutter and the carver remain under the eyes; but for us it is not to complain, when the plasterer blots out the last trace of our hands, and appropriates our work to himself; when he overlays it, and smoothes it, and colors it.

"Not from regard to the opinions of others, but from respect for himself, the mason will be faithful in his calling. There is none who has more need to feel in himself the consciousness of what he is. When the house is finished, when the soil is smoothed, and the surface plastered over, and the outside all over-wrought with ornament, he can even see in yet through all disguises and still recognize those exact and careful adjustments, to which the whole is indebted for its being and its persistence.

"But as the man who commits some evil deed has to fear, that, notwithstanding all precautions, it will one day come to light—so too must he expect who has done some good thing in secret, that it also, in spite of himself, will appear in the day; and therefore we make this foundation-stone at the same time a stone of memorial. Here, in these various hollows which have been hewn into it, many things are now to be buried, as a witness to some far-off world. These metal cases, hermetically sealed, contain documents in writing; matters of various note are engraved on these plates; in these fair glass bottles we bury the best old wine, with a note of the year of its vintage. We have coins, too, of many kinds, from the mint of the current year. All this we have received through the liberality of him for whom we build. There is yet space remaining, if guest or spectator desires to offer anything to the after-world!"

After a slight pause the speaker looked round; but, as is commonly the case on such occasions, no one was prepared; they were all taken by surprise. At last, a merry-looking young officer set the example, and said, "If I am to contribute anything which as yet is not to be found in this treasure-chamber, it shall be a pair of buttons from my uniform—I don't see why they do not deserve to go down to posterity!" No

sooner said than done, and then a number of persons found something of the same sort which they could do; the young ladies did not hesitate to throw in some of their side hair combs—smelling-bottles, and other trinkets were not spared. * * * * *

The young mason who had been most active through all this, again took his place as orator, and went on: "We lay down this stone forever, for the establishing the present and the future possessors of this house. But, in that we bury this treasure together with it, we do it in the remembrance—in this most enduring of works—of the perishableness of all human things. We remember that a time may come when this cover so fast sealed shall again be lifted; and that can only be when all shall again be destroyed which as yet we have not brought into being.

"But now—now that at once it may begin to be, back with our thoughts out of the future—back into the present. At once, after the feast which we have this day kept together, let us on with our labor; let no one of all those trades which are to work on our foundation, through us, keep unwilling holidays. Let the building rise swiftly to its height, and out of the windows which as yet have no existence, may the master of the house, with his family and with his guests, look forward with a glad heart over his broad lands. To him and to all here present, herewith be health and happiness."—GÖTHE'S "ELECTIVE AFFINITIES." *Part I. Chap. IX.*

"READ every day some beautiful poem, look at some noble picture, and, if possible, speak a few reasonable words."